GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:64
ANSWERED ON:01.03.2016
Quality of Foodgrains under PDS
Jena Shri Rabindra Kumar;Paraste Shri Dalpat Singh

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether complaints regarding distribution of poor quality foodgrains under the Public Distribution System (PDS) have been received, if so, the details thereof and the corrective steps taken in this regard during the last three years, State-wise;
(b) the quality norms fixed for various foodgrains under PDS, foodgrain-wise;
(c) whether the Government monitors the quality of foodgrains distributed through PDS;
(d) if so, the details thereof along with the mechanism put in place for the purpose and if not, the reasons therefor; and
(e) whether there is any grievance redressal system under the PDS for beneficiaries in relation to quality of foodgrains supplied to them and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN)
(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.
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STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO 64 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 01.03.2016 IN THE LOK SABHA
(a): State-wise details of the complaints about supply of poor quality foodgrains under Public Distribution System (PDS) and Other Welfare Schemes and action taken by the Government during last three years and current year are at Annex-I.
(b) The quality norms of various foodgrains for issue under PDS, foodgrain-wise are at Annex-II.
(c) & (d): Yes madam. Government monitors the quality of foodgrains distributed through the PDS. There are standing instructions to ensure that only good quality foodgrains are issued from FCI godowns to State Governments for distribution under PDS, which are as under:
(i) Only good quality foodgrains free from insect infestation and conforming to Food Safety Standards are to be issued under PDS.
(ii) Ample opportunities are to be provided to the State Government to check the quality of foodgrains prior lifting the foodgrains stocks from FCI godowns.
(iii) Samples of foodgrains are to be collected and sealed from the stocks of foodgrains to be issued under the PDS jointly by FCI and State Governments/UT Administrations.
(iv) An officer not below the rank of Inspector is to be deputed from State Government to take the delivery of foodgrain stocks from FCI godowns.
(v) Regular inspection to check the quality of foodgrains is to be carried out by the officers of State Government.
(vi) It is the responsibility of the concerned State Governments/ UT Administrations to ensure that during transportation and storage at different stages in the distribution chain, the foodgrains retain the required quality specifications.
(vii) The State Government, where the decentralized procurement is in operation, should ensure that the quality of foodgrains issued under PDS and other welfare schemes should meet the desired standards prescribed by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
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Before lifting of stocks of foodgrain from FCI godowns, State Government representatives in association with FCI analyse samples drawn jointly from the stacks to check the quality of the stock. Only after satisfaction about the quality, the stock is issued to State Government alongwith sealed representative sample. After issue of foodgrain to the State Government the quality is monitored by State Governments.
Quality control cells of the Department of Food & Public Distribution located at Bangalore, Bhopal, Bhubneshwar, Chennai, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow, New Delhi, Patna & Pune also monitor the quality of central pool foodgrains in food storage depots of FCI and State Governments.
(e): Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State/UT Governments. The operational responsibilities including complaints/grievance redressal rest with the concerned State/UT Governments.
In order to maintain supplies and to secure availability and distribution of essential commodities, Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 has been notified on 31.08.2001 by the Government which mandates the State/UT Governments to carry out all required action to ensure smooth functioning of TPDS. Under the said Order, the State/UT Governments are responsible for implementing TPDS. As far as quality of foodgrains is concerned, the requirement of joint inspection of foodgrains have been explained in the said Order. State Governments are competent to take action against those indulging in malpractices in TPDS by invoking provisions of the said Order.
Some States/UTs have established toll free help line numbers for redressal and registration of grievances under TPDS.
National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013, also provides for a two-tier grievance redressal mechanism comprising of District Grievance Redressal Officer (DGRO) at District level and State Food Commission (SFC) at the State level.
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In order to bring the PDS(C) Order, 2001, in consonance with the National Food Security Act, 2013, (NFSA), the Targeted Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2015 has been notified in supersession of the PDS(C) Order, 2001 for maintaining supplies and securing availability and distribution of foodgrains under the TPDS.

Provisions of the TPDS Control Order 2015 inter-alia address the issue of quality control, joint inspection of foodgrains, monitoring, penalty etc. State Governments are required to take action against those indulge in any irregularity including those affecting quality of foodgrains for smooth implementation of TPDS.

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